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CONCEPT OF DIFFERENT PURUSHA IN AYURVED: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT:

Introduction: The term *Purusha* is the synonym of *Brahma* and the term by implication is understood as creator. *Nirguna Brahman* may be interpreted as formless and potential energy. In the context of the evolution, according to *Vaisheshika Darshana* the three *Guna- Satva, Raja* and *Tam* are responsible for the evolution of universe with its animate and inanimate objects. *Chetana* alone is known as *Purusha*. Five elements and *Atma*, these six components are known as a *Shad dhatu Purusha*. He is also regarded as *Karma Purusha*. Treatment of this *Purusha* is based on *Panchmahabhoot*, so this is also known as *Chikitsa Purusha*. *Chaturvinashatika Purusha* comprises of twenty four *dhatu* i.e. *Man*, ten *Indriyan*, Five *Gyanendriyarth* and *Asta Prakriti*. He is also known as *Rashi Purusha* and *Sanyogaj Purusha*. *Avaykta, Mahan, Ahankara* and *Panchtanmatra* these eight are called as *Prakriti* and the remaining sixteen (eleven *Indriyas* and *Panch mahabhoot*) are known as *Vikara*. The *Rashisangyak Purusha* who represents *Shad dhatu* or combination of twenty four *tattva* gets contact with *Panchbhautika Sharira* due to the action prompted by likes and dislikes originated from *Moha*. This *Rashipurusha* is not eternal. **Conclusion:** In Ayurved, it has been clearly mentioned that treatment of each *Purusha* is different. So it's very important to understand concept of *Purusha* separately.

KEYWORDS: *Purusha, Karma, Chikitsa, Chaturvinashatika, Rashi*

1.INTRODUCTION

The term *Purusha* used in *Ayurvedic* literature conveys the sense of *Puman* or *Nara* (Male), *Ishvara* (God), *Jiva* (living creatures), *Prani* (Sentient beings) and *Manushya* (human beings). Etymologically, the term *Purusha* signifies the human beings- a supreme creature in the course of evolution or the *Atma* which has its abode in the *Puri* (dwelling place) or body. But here in true sense, it is suggestive of only the conscious human body. This *Purusha* is also called as *Karmapurusha*, *Rashipurusha*, *Sanyogapurusha* and *Lokpurusha*. The medical science too has assigned or aimed this *Purusha* as a receptacle or subject for the purpose because it is the seat of sickness and good health.¹

Supporting the above facts, *Acharya Sushruta* has also stated in *Ayurveda* an inseparable inherence of *Panchmahabhutas* and *Atma* is called *Purusha*. It is the seat of all the activities and also acts as basic object for treatment etc. Out of four types of creatures i.e. *Svedaja* (Sweat Originated), *Andaja* (egg originated), *Udbhija* (Earth originated) and *Jarayuja* (womb originated), the human beings are supreme and remaining other three are instrumental to it. This is the reason that the sentient things are the receptacles or an object of the medical science.²

In *Sharira sthana*, he has further emphasized upon the components of *Purusha* and designated it as the *Karma purusha* to be an objective of treatment. ³ *Caraka* has also recognized the *Purusha* to be composed of six *dhatu*s (elements), viz. five *Mahabhutas* (in their subtle form) and consciousness.⁴ In this context, *Kvj. Upendra Nath Das* holds the view that the *Mahabhutas* here represent the *Panchbhautic* derivatives constituting the *Sthula sharira* (Body) and *Atma* signifies the *Sukshma Sharira* (subtle body) as ordinary *Mahabhutas* and untempted *Atma* do not constitute the body, hence not recognized as *Dhatu*s.

Establishing the link between the *Purusha* and wordly life, *Caraka* has mentioned the *Manas* (Mind), *Atma* (Soul) and *Sharira* (Body) - these three are like a tripod; the world is sustained by their combination. This combination of the above three is called as *Purusha*, this is sentient and this is the subject matter of the *Veda* (*Ayurveda*); it is for this that this *Veda* is brought to light.⁵

1.1 Consideration of Purusha based on Dhatus

In *Ayurvedic* literature, the term *Purusha* though has been used for *Suddha Purusha* but in the present context, the different components accomplishing the body, dealt under the heading of *Dhatubheda*, stands true only for the *Upadhika Purusha*. The body said to be the seat of consciousness and an expedient of fruits or rewards of actions (pleasure or pain) done in the previous life, is the *Upadhi* of all pervasive *Atma*. The term *Upadhi* is suggestive of the process by which one puts in or imparts own attributes in its nearest matter or object.⁶

The *Purusha*, if analyzed based on different *Darshana*, then there can be 1) One, 2) Two, 3) Three, 4) Six, 5) Thirteen, 6) Seventeen and 7) Twenty four or Twenty five components or the same may be said to be constituted by multiple parts. Out of these, the One *Dhutaka purusha* is only the absolute one while the others are the diversities of *Rashipurusha* when viewed in the light of different *Darshanas*. *Ayurveda*, the science of life gives importance to only *Shad dhatuja Purusha* because the remaining others can be easily accommodated in or explained based on the same. The materialist and Atheist *Charvak* recognizes only the physical and *Panchbhautika* entity to *Karmapurusha*. They believe that there is no existence of *Atma* and only the *Panchbhutas* on their own constitute the body. Putting forth an example they say as the intoxicating effect generates by themselves merely by combination of fermentative agents, similarly, the consciousness manifests automatically when *Mahabhutas* jointly constitute the embryo. *Charaka*, has straight way contradicted this view and said that those who do not believe on scriptures and reasoning can only accept the formation of earthen pot simply by means of senseless stick, wheel and earthen heap and the formation of house by means of straw and pieces of wood without potter and constructor, respectively.⁷

1.1.1 Ek dhatuja Purusha

This signifies Absolute or Pure *Purusha*. It is unchangeable, indistinct, a seat of consciousness, supreme *Atma* used in different scriptures and said to be residing inside the body, has been designated as *Purusha*. This very absolute consciousness manifests in *Karma purusha* or *Rashi Purusha* through the *Sattva* or *Manas*, *Sabdadi bhutas* and *Chakshuradi indriyas*. In the form of subtle body this very *Atma* is said to be *Jivatma* found in different bodies of creation. Remaining *Nirguna* (Devoid of qualities), it looks to possess the qualities simply because of the union with *Sattvadi* or *Mana* etc. *Charaka* has also said that during intra uterine development, first of all the conscious element i.e. the soul endowed with mental equipment unite with the *Mahabhutas*.⁸ The absoluteness or Purity of the *Atma* is experienced only after destruction of the *Sukshma Sharira* at the time of dissolution or imbecility and not in course of creation or old age. The difference is only that the *Sukshma Sharira* or *Karana Sharira* endowed with desire, instincts and ignorance persists even at the time of dissolution and disappears at the stage of salvation. Even the element of Consciousness (etymologically residing in *Pura* or Body) alone constitutes the *Purusha*.⁴

1.1.2 Shad dhatuj Purusha

- The *Karmapurusha* is said to be composed of Six *dhatu*s i.e. *Panchmahabhutas* and *Jivatma*. With the *Rachana Sharir* stand point, this *Rashi purusha* agreeable to *Vaisheshika*, has got great applicability and hence given more importance by *Charaka* and *Susruta*. According to *Charak*, the *Purusha* is nothing but the combination of Six *dhatu*s, viz. *Prithvi*, *Jala*, *Tejas*, *Vayu*, *Akasha* and the *Brahman*, the unmanifested one. The *Prithvi* constitutes the form of the man, *Jala*, moisture; *Tejas*, heat; *Vayu*, elan vital; *Akasha*, all the porous parts and *Brahman*, the Internal Soul.⁹ *Acharya Sushruta* has also agreed that in *Ayurveda*, the *Purusha* has been said to be a conjunction of six *Tattvas* viz. *Panchmahabhutas* and *Atma*.² Simultaneously, it should be also kept in mind that, though, our body is *Panchbhautika* but by application of principle 'Vyapadesashtu bhuyasa', it is said to be *Parthiva* due to dominance of *Prithvi tattva*.
- The 'Matradi shadbhava samudayatmaka garbha' can be the second possibility of *Shad dhatuka* aspect of *Purusha*, *Charaka* has also stated that the combination of the factors contributed by the mother, the father, the Soul, the *Satmyaja* (Wholesomeness), *Rasaja* (Digestive products of mother's food) and *Sattvaja* (mind) constitute the *Garbha* (Embryo).¹⁰ he has already, earlier stated that all these different procreative factors contribute in the formation of *Garbha* in the same manner as a *Kutagara* (round shaped cottage used for administering hot fomentation therapy) constructed by various types of construction materials and many technical parts, respectively.¹¹ *Chakrapani* has also supported the *Matrijadi* factors contributing in the formation of *Garbha* (embryo).¹²

1.1.3 Chaturvinshatamaka Purusha

*Maharishi Charaka*¹³ and *Kashyapa*¹⁴, both have recognized the *Purusha* to be composed of twenty four 'Tattvas'. The difference in number is merely when 'Mulaprakriti' and *Purusha* are considered separately, with the view of emancipation, then there are twenty five *Tattvas* but when both are taken jointly in the form of an 'Avyakta Tattva', like the *Garbhajabija* (Zygote) resulting out of the union of *Shukra* and *Shonita*, the *Karmapurusha* is said to be constituted by twenty four *Tattvas*, which justifies the process of evolution.

Acharya Charaka has stated that based on another classification, *Purusha* comprises of twenty four *Dhatu*s i.e. *Manas* (Mind), ten *Indriyas* (sensory and motor organs), five objects of sense organs and *Prakriti* consisting of eight *Dhatu*s, viz. five *Mahabhutas* (in their subtle forms), *Ahankara* (ego), *Mahana* (intellect) and *Avyakta*.

1.2 Concept of Purusha according to Darshanas

The basic aim of both *Ayurveda* and *Darshana* is same, that is *Moksha*. To explain this theory of *Moksha* concept of *Purusha* was coined. The concept of *Purusha* in *Ayurveda* is amalgamation of concept of *Purush* in all *Darshanas* as-

- Sankhya* and *Yoga Darshan* talks about constituents of *Purusha*. The *Caturvinshatmaka* / *Panchvinshatmaka Purusha* is explanation of the same as it includes the concept of *Atma* and *Mana* along with other entities.
- Vaisheshika* and *Naya Darshan* deals with the physical entity and logics. The *Shad dhatuja Purusha* is mentioned about the same concept i.e. *Panchmahabhutas* and *Atma*.
- Vedanta* and *Mimansa* talks about *Vedas* rituals and about *Brahma*. *Ekdhatuja Purush* is explained about the same i.e. *Atma*.¹⁵

2. DISCUSSION

In *Ayurveda* there are 3 types of *Chikitsa*-

Daiv-vyapashraya: It is the *Chikitsa* which discuss about *Bali*, *Homa* etc. i.e. supernatural treatment of spiritual diseases.

Yukti-vyapashraya: This *Chikitsa* talks about treatment based on logics after understanding pathology of disease. It covers both *Dravya* and *Adravya bhuta Chikitsa*.

Satvavjaya: This *Chikitsa* undertakes the psychological diseases and its treatment. It also deals with upliftment of individual mental status and this higher level of *Satvavjaya Chikitsa* is called as “*Nesthiki Chikitsa*”.¹⁶

As evident from above that *Dev vyapashraya Chikitsa* can only be understood when one have concept of *Atma*, which can only be understood in light of theory of *Ekdhatuja Purusha*, similarly one can practice *Yukti vyapashraya Chikitsa* only when he/she has properly assimilated the theory of *Shad dhatuja Purusha*, likewise the *Satvavjaya Chikitsa* and *Nesthiki Chikitsa* can only be understood when one have clear cut concept of *Caturvinshatmaka Purusha*.

The aggregate of five *mahabhutas* and consciousness as the sixth one is known as *Purusha*. Consciousness alone is also known as *Purusha*. Again from division of constituents he is known as possessing twenty four entities such as mind, ten sense organs, five sense objects and *Prakriti* (Matter) consisting of eight entities (*Avyakta*, *mahat*, *ahankara* and five *tanmatras*).

The *para* (*Avyakta*- the primordial unmanifest) holds the conjunction of intellect, sense organs, mind and sense objects. The aggregate of twenty four entities is known as *Purusha*. The person associated with (Predominant) *Rajas* and *Tamas* has endless conjunction of this type but when these two are subdued with the predominance of *Satva*, the conjunction ceases to exist.

Rashipurusha

There are two reasons of its name as *Rashipurusha*.

1. It is an amalgamation of 24 entities (*Rashi*) so known as *Rashi purusha*.¹⁷
2. According to *Nyaya Darshan*,¹⁸ there are three *Rashi*- *Raag*, *Dvesha* and *Moha*. *Purusha* get influenced by these *Rashis* and due to this he takes birth in different *Yonis*(different species). So, being in close contact with these *Rashis*, *Purusha* has been given name as *Rashipurusha*.

3. CONCLUSION

Finally it can be concluded that the supreme soul is beginningless, no birth as such can be ascribed to him. Of course the Empirical Soul (*Purusha*) who represents the combination of twenty four elements is born out of action prompted by likes and dislikes originated from ignorance. The contact of *Purusha* with twenty four elements continues so long as he is influenced by *Rajas* and *Tamas*. The moment he gets rid of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, he is freed from contacts by virtue of dominance of *Sattva*.

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